I. GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

Habitat

101 The Timbira habitat extends from 3° to 9° S. latitude and from 42° to 49° W.
131 longitude—through the northeastern part of the Central Brazilian steppe area, where that area adjoins the southeastern tip of the Amazon rain forests. The tropical forest extends back of the coastal steppe strip liable to inundation, beginning at a point on the Tocantins somewhat above the Araguaya confluence, and includes the entire Gurupy basin, the middle and lower Pindaré, the lower Grajahú, and the lower Mearim. Its domain comprises the present habitat of the following Timbira tribes: the Western Gaviões; the Krẽyé of Cajuapára; the Krẽyé and Kukóekamekra of Bacabal.*

134 But by far the greatest part of Timbira territory is covered by high steppes and
● 137 dry forest; tall timber occurs only in the form of *galeria* forests along the brooks
133 and rivers, also at times on the slopes of the so-called mountains (*serras*), at the foot of which these watercourses usually develop from many minor springs. These inextensive wooded tracts are of great economic significance for the steppe Indian, since they offer the only soil suitable for his primitive husbandry.

The *galeria* forest further provides not only the material for housebuilding, but also the extremely important burity palm (*Mauritia flexuosa*), the leaves of which furnish the main material for basketry while its fruits are edible and its trunks are made into logs carried in relay races. Further, there are the oleaginous babassu palm (*Orbignia speciosa*); the sororóca (*Heliconia* sp.) with its gigantic leaves, indispensable in Indian cookery; and many other useful plants.

The predominant part of the Timbira steppes consists of *campos cerrados*, that is, grass tracts with more or less dense stands of trees and bushes. Absolutely pure steppes I have seen only in the upper Pindaré country, and even these were only of minor extent. The two Timbira tribes of that region—Krĩkatí and Pụkóbye—
[101] are accordingly called by the other members of their branch Popéykateye (inhabitants of true [or beautiful], pey, steppes, põ).

The prevailing grass species is Capim agreste (*Pannascum* sp.). Noteworthy among the trees are the sucupira (*Cassiea* sp.), which symbolizes for the Timbira the power of resistance; the sambahyba (*Couratella* sp.), whose rough leaves serve to polish wood; the pau de leite (*Sapium* sp.), whose latex when mixed with powdered charcoal forms the favorite pigment; the tucum palm (*Astrocaryum* sp.), important for its fibers; the almecegueira (*Protium* sp.) with an odorous rosin much used in decorative outfits; finally, the fruit-bearing piquy (*Caryocar* sp.), bacury (*Platonia* sp.), and the mangabeira (*Hancornia* sp.).

[134] The soil is mostly sandy, more rarely clayey, and still more rarely rocky. The
133 northern Timbira country is rather flat, rising only quite imperceptibly southward.
[114] Even the most recent maps (Stieler, 1928) crowd the southern half with mountain chains—to the grave disappointment of an observer on the spot, who finds simply mesas and small plateaus with steep slopes, sporadic residual phenomena, mostly

104 * In the rendering of the aboriginal terms with which the monograph bristles it seemed best to adhere to the orthography established for The-Apinayé, a slight simplification of that chosen by Nimuendajú himself. A tilde over vowels indicates nasalization; a short hook below a vowel designates it as postpalatal. The latter symbol is necessary, because it defines a phonemic difference. The following values hold for symbols requiring explanation:

ẽ = first German e in Ehe
õ = German o in ohne
ũ, ü = as in German
ŋ = half vocalic ng
š = English sh
č = Spanish ch
ž = French j
x = German ch in ach
' = glottal stop

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

ments of the Krĩkatí and Pụkóbye were of the same order; of these, Canto da Aldea had eight huts, São Felix thirteen, and Recurso eleven. These dwellings were either quite open or had a single wall in the rear, whose palm leaves were attached in vertical position, with the points downward. This mode of attachment is characteristic of the aboriginal Eastern Timbira, the method now customary among the Rąmkõ'kamekra (p. 40), having been adopted from the Neobrazilians according to the Indians' own statements. The smallest and poorest huts I have seen are those in Recurso.

The Kre'pụ'mkateye settlement of Gamelleira do Rumo is situated in the woods, on the steep left bank, 50 m. in height, of the Rio Grajahú. It comprises eight rather small huts, most of them having walls of clay-daubed latticework; they surround an approximately round plaza of barely 50 m. in diameter.

Sleeping and sitting accommodations.—The principal article of furniture is the platform bed (pą'ra), a grid of closely laid burity leaf stalks resting on four forked posts with two crossbeams. Its ordinary elevation above the floor is about 50 cm., the length from 170 to 200 cm., and the width varies according to the number of occupants—from half a meter for a single person to 3 m. for a sizable family. If the house has a closed space, the beds—one for each individual family—are always indoors. A young girl generally constructs her platform bed below the roof at a height of 2 m., and surrounds it with a partition of mats; for a ladder she uses a notched log or simply a pole tied in slanting position. The boys and young men as a rule sleep in the plaza outdoors, but several of them may sleep on a platform bed indoors. This is, however, merely a makeshift in case of rain.

A larger or smaller number of mats lie on the bed, which when properly made has a bottom layer of one or two mats of babassu or anajá grass (kupíp) to level the unevenness of the surface, with mats of burity bast (ka'tụ') above. The former are long, but relatively narrow and always in a two-step twilling technique; the latter of any desired width (up to 120 cm.), but at most 1 m. in length, to which must be added a 30 to 40 cm. fringe. Some of the Indians make burity mats de luxe by plaiting into the fabric ornamental horizontal or vertical stripes or squares and painting them with yellow dots, strokes, and zigzags, the pigment being derived from the root of the urucú shrub. The burity mats do service as a covering, but the feet remain bare, being always kept warm at night by a fire maintained at the foot of the bed.

However, the mat-covered platform beds also serve as benches and tables; indeed, a large part of domestic life is spent on them. Many take their meals there, some permit pet dogs to find a resting place on the bed. In consequence the mats are usually greasy and brownish-red from urucú and dirt. When they have turned filthy, they are washed in a stream with the leaves of a shrub that yield a soaplike lather. On the other hand, the anajá and babassu grass mats, which can be quickly manufactured, are never washed, but simply superseded by new ones.

On fine nights many families are accustomed to sleep for several hours on mats on the ground directly in front of their houses. After sunset the people like to sit on mats outdoors and thus simply remain lying there, falling asleep, even without a fire, until the chill of the morning drives them inside.

Indoors the Canella mostly seat themselves on the bed or, if it should be present, on a hammock. However, there are also, though rather rarely, curved little stools (mekričą) from the spathe of the anajá (avarprẽp), especially among the Krĩkatí and Pụkópye. Outdoors one likes to seat oneself on mats, women also using for this purpose fire fans (pl. 12, *a*); and in the woods a bunch of leaves is torn off and

1; Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

used to sit on. In the plaza it is common to sit or lie on the bare ground, though some regularly bring along a mat to rest on, others making a flat club into a little bench. But beams as seats placed at the periphery of the plaza I saw only among the Kre'pų'mkateye.

The platform bed is universal among the Rąmkõ'kamekra, Apą'nyekra, and Krahõ', but Snethlage misunderstands Silva e Souza when citing him to support its use among the Southern Kayapó. That author merely reports "arranchamentos com 400 camas," which last word may designate a sleeping facility on the ground as well as on furniture. Snethlage also misquotes me on the subject of hammocks; these are not in vogue among the Krĩkatí, who sleep on mats on the ground and are covered with mats, which partly holds also for the Pųkóbye.[128] He rightly ascribes hammocks to the Kre'pų'mkateye—the only Timbira among whom a number of persons regularly sleep in hammocks. The Krĩkatí, Pųkóbye, and Rąmkõ'kamekra do own a fair number of these contrivances, but exclusively for resting in the daytime, and nearly all of them have been obtained in barter from the near-by Guajajára. The hammocks found among the Krĩkatí and Pųkóbye all come from the quite isolated hamlet of Urucú; the Kre'pų'mkateye obtain theirs from the Guajajára farther up the Grajahú; and the Rąmkõ'kamekra from the settlements of the same tribe beyond the Rio Corda. The last-mentioned Timbira have also obtained some Neobrazilian specimens on their begging trips to state capitals.

In any case, to date the Timbira have never manufactured a single cotton hammock. On the other hand, in their temporary camps they will take but a few minutes to complete a hammock quite serviceable for a few days by interlacing the tips of two burity leaflets. The ropes for suspending this type of hammock are made of the stalks of the two leaves when worn down to a thin strip. Occasionally such hammocks may be seen even in permanent villages, especially among the Krahõ'. Among the Apą'nyekra, Snethlage saw a hammock for little children that had been knotted together from a few bast threads. I noted a rather large sample of this type among the Rąmkõ'kamekra; it consisted of ropes made of the black bark of a *philodendron* species. It was not in the Guajajára twined technique, but rather conformed to that of Timbira scoop nets (pl. 17, *c*), though wider-meshed. The Šerénte rather frequently fasten such hammocks to the branches of trees for hunting from ambush; accordingly, there is no reason to think of diffusion from the Tupí.

Storage.—In two or three Ponto houses there was in one corner an attic with a flooring of poles. It was partitioned off with thatched walls, provided with a small door, and made accessible by a notched tree. This chamber serves for the storage of provisions and of valuables; it is due to Neobrazilian influence. Not a single Timbira tribe has scaffolds for the stowing away of utensils. Except for the attics just described, such objects are thrust into the roof or wall thatch; stuck under the beds; or, in the case of small articles, most commonly suspended in bags and baskets, such as are always available in considerable numbers. For this purpose the house posts are frequently allowed to keep a projecting limb, and the same end is served by the cords that sometimes hang down from the rafters. However, there are no specially designed hooks or crossbeams for suspension.

Fire.—The fireplaces, fixed appurtenances of the dwellings, fall into three categories. First, there is the small fire kept going in the night at the foot of the beds; in the daytime it is not used except possibly for some technological task. Secondly, there is the fireplace with its hearthstones for boiling food; this often coincides with the foregoing,[129] but otherwise is likely to be placed in the unenclosed space

[128] Snethlage, Nordostbras. Ind., 155, 116.

[129] This seems contradictory to the preceding statement. *Editor.*

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

The upper margin of the decorated surface is marked by an obtuse angle between the shoulders, the apex lying below their level. From this boundary the decorator glues the down on the body so that it extends halfway down the forearm and lower part of the leg, leaving the genitalia free. The downless parts of the body, excepting usually the face, are reddened with urucú.

The tamhą'k do not wear the continuous down covering of others, but have, both in front and in back, two stripes the width of a hand, one on each side of the body. Each stripe extends from the clavicle or shoulder blade down to the middle of the lower leg. A somewhat narrower stripe of down is glued on the front and the back of each arm. At all joints the stripes are interrupted.

For gluing the down the Indians use the almecega rosin of *Hedwigia balsamifera*, which has a very agreeable odor. This is the only pleasant feature in the procedure, which involves the chewing of babassu seeds and spitting the oily juice on the rosin previously smeared over the palms of the hands. Rubbing the palms together produces a somewhat tough, yellow ointment, which is clapped on the subject's skin, and rubbed into it. Then another operator immediately dabs the falcon down on top. So long as the decoration is fresh the wearer looks rather attractive in his snow-white raiment of down. But soon after, especially after bathing, the covering grows very unsightly; however, its vestiges persist for over a week. Hairs, which it is true are almost lacking on the Indian skin, have a disagreeable way of adhering to one another because of the rosin, and wherever a man sits or lies down he gets stuck. I have a veritable horror of this procedure, but as a member of the tamhą'k organization am obliged to submit to it whenever I return to the tribe after a prolonged absence.

By scraping of the young leafstalks of the paty palm (*Orcus* sp.) one obtains a light pinkish-yellow wool that is stored and applied like falcon down. But while the Apinayé uniformly employ this material in place of falcon down, which is not customary among them, the Rąmkõ'kamekra restrict its use to members of the Duck society.

Miscellaneous.—Finger rings (hukrą̃čẽčą) are constantly worn by both sexes. Originally they were black and inconspicuous, being made of the caudal skin of the chameleon (*Iguana tuberculata*) and the teyú (*Tupinambis teguixin*). Today men and women crave silver and brass rings of European make with glass stones. Whenever possible they overload themselves with these ornaments to an unesthetic degree, or suspend them from the necklace, this consisting nowadays mostly of glass beads and some pendant, which occasionally both sexes wear from infancy to old age. However, even today the seeds of a grass (*Scleria* sp.) are fashioned into beads to be strung. In order to be able to perforate them it is necessary to grind them to a point on a whetstone at one spot. This is effected with the aid of a fragment of *Lagenaria* bowl with a little opening just large enough to have the curvature of the *Scleria* seed project somewhat when it is put on top. The worker seizes the slightly bent bowl, presses the seed on top of the hole with the tip of the index finger, and grinds off the projecting curvature.

Infants often also wear wrist and ankle cords with pendent bits of all sorts of wood and roots or little bones and seeds, to which medicinal virtues are ascribed. Wristbands (mepače) of babassu grass are worn by girls and young men; only the men wear bands of the same material on the upper arm and forehead, as well as knee bands of either cotton or babassu grass (pls. 3, *c*, *d*; 11, *c*, *d*).

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

Hygiene

515 Unless subject to taboos, both sexes bathe at least once a day, the younger people twice or three times. If all the residents are assembled during the vų'tę' period, the younger generation take their first bath jointly before sunrise as soon as the youths' and maidens' dance in the plaza abruptly comes to a stop. At that moment all dash toward the brook, including the girls, who have quickly fetched their gourd bottles. Men and women of mature age are also in the habit of joining, but those really old rarely come, if at all. The girls go directly upstream, take up a position counter to the current, and fill their vessels, everyone laughing and splashing about. At this early hour the air is piercing cold on the steppe, and precisely before sunrise a gust of wind is likely to make the bathers shiver as they get out of their bath. In order to get warm everybody rushes up the slope toward the village. But the members of whatever festive organizations happen to be functioning assemble halfway to the settlement around fires, for which they have already brought along dry palm grass. Only after having warmed themselves they run shouting, each society separately, into the village, where each occupies its appropriate site in the plaza.

During the day they generally bathe again, performing their ablutions by rubbing themselves with their hands or with leaves. After nightfall they avoid entering the water. The hair, as noted, is washed by rubbing it between the palms. Notwithstanding their efforts the skin rarely appears wholly clean, for it usually retains remnants of old body paint, feathers glued on, and the like—the sort of [854] things regarded as dirt by civilized people. Babies at the breast are the cleanest part of the population, for they are washed without delay as soon as they are dirty.

The oral cavity is cleansed with the index and middle fingers and rinsed with sand. They never clean their fingernails.

[857] When at most three years old the Rąmkõ'kamekra boys and girls know how to swim and dive. I observed that the Krahõ', Kre'pų'mkateye, and the Timbira of 481 Araparytíua were all good swimmers, and the same has been reported of the 171 Põrekamekra.[355] On the other hand, I had a different impression of the Krĩkati, who do not live along running watercourses and of whom I suspect at least some are unable to swim. At all events they manifested a striking repugnance to deep water, as I noted repeatedly when they accompanied me from their village to Porto Franco on the Tocantins. At the Ribeirão da Aldea, whose wooded bank was somewhat more than knee-deep under water, while in midstream the water of the brook did not extend beyond my saddle, these Indians cut off sticks to take soundings ahead of them, and I had long reached the opposite bank when I still heard them splashing behind me and excitedly shouting at one another. They talked of the Ribeirão dos Arraias, which is 20 m. wide and 1½ deep, as though it were an insurmountable obstacle; and the successful crossing took an eternity, for each of the women had to be led across by two men. Still more amusing was the passage of the shallow, but swift streamlet known as Lageado in a canoe belonging to a Neobrazilian. At first no one ventured to step into it, and when the first hero hesitantly and diffidently succumbed to my mockery, his wife kept singing in a booming voice on the bank till she saw him safely on land.

356 The dwellings are in general tolerably cleanly. Every self-respecting woman will 412 sweep her house and the space before it at least once a day—even several times if the offals after a meal require it. The brooms are made of the inflorescence of the [137] assahy (*Euterpe* sp.) or the bacaba palm (*Oenocarpus* sp.), or a bundle of mallow

[355] Pohl, Reise, 2:200 f.

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SCS Timbira SCS

Ge SL5

divided (according to their own account) into those anciently known and those adopted after intercourse with Neobrazilians.

Aboriginally known:

Maize, põhỹ (*Zea mays*)
Sweet potato, yąt (*Batatas edulis*)
Yam, krĩrõ' (*Dioscorea* sp.)
Manioc, kwųr (*Manihot utilissima*)
Sweet manioc, kwųr-kahą'k (*Manihot aipi*)
Horse bean, pąakrįt' (*Phaseolus* sp.)
Arrowroot, kurũare (*Maranta* sp.)
Gourd, kĩkõkahą'k (*Cucurbita* sp.)
Ground nut, kahỹ' (*Arachis* sp.)
[European name lacking], krupá (*Cissus* sp.)
Cotton, kahą't (*Gossypium* sp.)
Bottle gourd, kĩkõn (*Lagenaria* sp.)
Cuyeté, kõ'tšé (*Crescentia* sp.)
Caya de rama, ——— (*Cucurbita* sp.)
Urucú, pų (*Bixa orellana*)

Adopted after intercourse with Neobrazilians:

Rice	Beans	Pineapple
Watermelon	Orange	Tobacco
Banana	Lemon	Timguy (fish poison)
Sugar-cane	Mango	
Cayenne pepper	Papaya	

The only plant-origin myth relates to maize and coincides with the Apinayé equivalent.[140] It combines two principal motives—the world tree and the star wife. The former occurs among Carib peoples of Guiana, having been recorded by Koch-Grünberg among the Taulipáng, by Brett among the Akawoí, by Im Thurn and Roth for the Carib proper, while Nordenskiöld reports it from the Arawakan Čáne of the northern Chaco. The other motive seems to be derived from the Serénte, who far more logically connect it not with the origin of maize, but with a visit to the sky.

Nordenskiöld derives Gê yąt (sweet potato) from Tupí yetį'k, which is supposed to point to a transmission of the species from the Tupí. I consider this highly improbable, for the Northwestern Gê would never have lopped off an accented syllable, but would presumably have transmuted the hypothetical loan-word into yetí (cf. below as to the assimilation of Tupí tapití). Further, there is a striking fact: Tupí agriculture stresses maize and manioc, the Northwestern and Central Gê emphasize sweet potatoes and yams, which virtually furnish their daily bread but play a more modest role among the Tupí.

In my description of Apinayé tillage I noted that the Northwestern and Central Gê probably did not acquire manioc from either the Tupí or the Karayá, whose methods of employment and preparation are totally distinct.[141] Against such borrowing may further be cited the term kwųr, uniformly distributed as it is over the entire Northwestern branch, from the Suyá to the remotest Timbira tribes. From Ribeiro's denial of the Krahõ' Indians' familiarity with *the preparation of flour*—"farinha de pau," that is, flour from unfermented manioc[142]—it does not by any means follow, as Snethlage assumes,[143] that they lacked manioc altogether. For they may very well have used it as they do today, in the form of pies baked in earth ovens. In recent times the Eastern Timbira have adopted the preparation of flour together with the basketry press, not from the Tupí-Guajajára, but from Neobraziliana. This is indicated by their designating this utensil not by the Guajajára term tipiti, but by its disfigured Neobrazilian form tapití, assimilated to Timbira phonology as tapti. They further give to the roasting pan its Portuguese name, forno.

The species of arrowroot planted by the Rąmkõ'kamekra differs from the Neobrazilian form.

[140] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 165–167.
[141] *Ibid.*, 88.
[142] Memoria, § 73.
[143] Nordostbras. Ind., 162.

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1935) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

not crave these larvae so passionately as many Guaraní, let alone Kaingang, who fill thick bamboo tubes with them. I have never seen Timbira eating grasshoppers, ants, or any other insects besides those mentioned above.

Weapons.—The principal Timbira weapon is the bow, kuhẽ′ (pl. 15, *b*) nowadays receding with the spread of muzzle-loaders, but still predominantly used even by the Rąmkõ′kamekra, who own probably more firearms than the other steppe Timbira. The bow is of pau d'arco (*Tecoma* sp.), more rarely of piquiá (*Caryocar* sp.), or pau rôxo wood. Its size diminishes with its importance in warfare and hunting. Among the Western Gaviões, who lack guns and still guard their woods with the bow, it attains the enormous length of 254 cm.; the private collection of Estevão de Oliveira contains a specimen. These bows thus rank third for length among the South American types known to me, being surpassed only by the equivalents from the Bakairí of the Xingú headwaters and from the Kaingang of São Paulo. The "Bugre" (Botocudo of Sta. Catharina) bows pronounced as the longest by Krickeberg[22] are thus far inferior, being only 230 cm. long; and so far as my experience goes those of the Sirionó of lower Bolivia, to which some assign the first place, never exceed 216 cm. The maximum measurements among the Eastern Gaviões (Pųkóbye), Krĩkatí, Krahõ′, and Rąmkõ′kamekra) are, respectively: 192, 191, 188, 183 cm.[23]

Common as is a round cross section among the Krahõ′, it is limited to the toy bows of little boys among the Rąmkõ′kamekra, and these may also be elliptical. Otherwise the Timbira—the Kre'pų′mkateye less than the rest—uniformly flatten the string side; a ceremonial Rąmkõ′kamekra specimen has approximately oval cross section.

The tip of the Rąmkõ′kamekra bow, around which they wind the taut end of the string, generally, though not always, has for its support a pad of cordage (pl. 15, *c*). Among the other tribes the tip is slightly set off on the outside. To produce tension they loosen the corded loop from the other end, shorten the string by vigorous twisting, bend the bow with the knee, and push the end again over the rather blunt tip. The bowstring, kuhẽ̃ẽ̃, is of tucum fiber; I have not seen the cotton form ascribed by Snethlage to "the northern tribes."

The hunting arrows of the Timbira are of camayuva cane (*Guadua* sp.) and generally as long as the bow or but slightly shorter (pl. 16, *f*). Solely the Western Gaviões, who require arrows corresponding in length to their gigantic bows, use only canna braba (*Gynerium saccharoides*), obviously because the thickness of the camayuva cane is not proportionate to the requisite length. This tribe tips arrows with huge, two-edged, unserrated bamboo points up to 35 cm. long and 4 cm. wide, which are glued and tied to a wooden foreshaft. Others have a dentate wooden point. Among the other Eastern Timbira I was too late to see arrows with bamboo knives, which are presumably above all for use in warfare. The typical arrow of the Eastern Timbira (like the Apinayé and Šerénte form) altogether lacks a specially mounted point, the end of the camayuva shaft being itself shaped into a point by unilateral beveling. This is the customary hunting arrow of all steppe Timbira, not (as Snethlage states) a mere weapon for practice. The Krĩkatí, Pųkóbye, Kre'pų′mkateye, and Rąmkõ′kamekra have arrows with an inserted wooden foreshaft supporting a flat bone tip, which is put on so that there is a laterally projecting blunt barb (pl. 16, *g*). The last-named people more frequently substitute for the bone point one of iron wire (pl. 16, *h*) or a little barblike rod of hard wood.

[22] In Buschan, Illustrierte Völkerkunde, 283, 284.

[23] Wied-Neuwied, Reise, v. 2, 23, found a "Patachos" bow "8 Fuss 9½ Zoll englisch." *Editor.*

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

I noted arrows headed with hollow bones (hõ'kóp) and with flat iron points (krowakõwakį') among the Kre'pų'mkateye and Pųkóbye; the former type occasionally turns up also among the Rąmkõ'kamekra.

In addition to the foregoing, all steppe Timbira have arrows with smooth wooden heads, as well as with a cross of two pairs of little sticks tied on so that the point projects only a little. The latter type, which serves for hunting birds, is borrowed from the Guajajára, as witnessed by the native term, pryĩkakót (Guajajára bird-arrow). The bird-arrows of half-grown boys are topped either with a ball of burity bast fiber (pl. 16, *e*) or a segment of a kerneled corncob; or the point may consist of the thickened knoblike root end of the arrowshaft itself (pl. 16, *d*).

All Timbira arrows have tangential bridge feathering (pl. 16, *j*). The feathers are tied with cotton string, while the place for inserting the wooden foreshaft of the arrow is mostly wrapped with black guambé (*Philodendron* sp.) bark. From an old Indian of the Čą'kamekra tribe now merged in the Rąmkõ'kamekra population, I obtained arrows with gynerium shaft and radial sewed feathering (pl. 16, *k*). His neat and competent execution proved thorough familiarity with the rather difficult technique, not a mere attempt at imitation. According to his statements the Čą'kamekra used both bridge and sewed feathering, the latter having been borrowed from the Gamella of Codó, who were destroyed in 1856. Both techniques are also traditionally ascribed to the Gamella of Vianna.[328]

Sewed feathering has for its criterion *attachment of the feathers with threads traversing the shaft by means of several transverse perforations* specially made for the purpose. It occurs in two discrete areas—in the central Matto Grosso and on both sides of the lower Tocantins. Most of the instances given by Schmidt,[329] on the other hand, do not properly fall under this head for lack of any perforation of the shaft.

Our first area, defined by Nordenskiöld,[330] embraces the Bororo, Bakairí (Carib), Yaulapití (Arawak), Trumaí (isolated), Huanyam (Čapakúra), the Tupí stock being represented by the Auetõ', Kamayurá and Kayabí. The existence of a second center was first established by Raymundo Lopes on the basis of literary sources. I am, however, in a position considerably to augment the list of these northern groups, which at present may be summarized as follows: 1, Urubú (Tupí); 2, Amanayé = Ararandeuára (Tupí); 3, Guajajára (rare—Tupí); 4, Parakanã (Tupí); 5, Asuriní (Tupí ?); 6, Arára (Carib); 7, Pariri (Carib); 8, Čą'kamekra (Gê); 9, Gamella of Codó (?); 10, Gamella of Vianna (isolated).

I cannot get rid of the impression that the people who spread this technique were of Tupí stock, though not of the Še branch of this family (Guaraní, Tupinambá). Of the eight Matto Grosso tribes, also, three are Tupí.

The end of the arrow is held with the right thumb and index finger, while the string is pulled with the index, middle and ring fingers. The shaft rests below the extended index finger of the left hand, which holds the bow. The arrow is fitted to the string in horizontal position; in letting it fly the archer holds his bow in approximately vertical position. He aims in a straight line, making his shots random only when compelled by the greatness of the distance. Really indirect shots do not occur; I am unable to confirm Snethlage's relevant statement.[331] Given a suitable angle, a Timbira arrow flies about seventy meters, but some measure of certainty goes only with about half that distance.

[328] Nimuendajú, The Gamella Indians, 12.
[329] Schmidt, Kulturkreise und Kulturschichten, 1035 *f.*
[330] Nordenskiöld, Ethnography, 3:45, also map 4.
[331] Snethlage, Nordostbras. Ind., 158.

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

aboriginal, is the forest creeper the Timbira call ha'kró, the Neobrazilians timbó. The Indians tear it out with the roots, then wash off the earth, and tap the root on a log with an appropriate stick so as to separate the fibers. While some rinse the fiber balls in the water of the creek, others wait downstream in order to seize with their hands the stupefied fish as they drift along, or spit them on arrows, or catch the smaller fry with a scoop net, krį, this last being a conical net mounted on a hoop without a handle. My reason for regarding it as aboriginal is that, while lacking among both the Guajajára and Neobrazilians, it appears in the same form with the identical designation among the Eastern (Rąmkõ'kamekra, Pųkóbye, Kre'pų'mkateye) and Western Timbira. The small fish are collected in gourd bowls or little baskets, the larger ones are ranged on special cords, tepčečą, with a wooden tip at one end and a transverse stick at the other (fig. 6).

In drugging fish, too, they like to select a young tamhą'k, who is the first to enter the water when the stupefied fish begin to appear, while the other Indians wait on

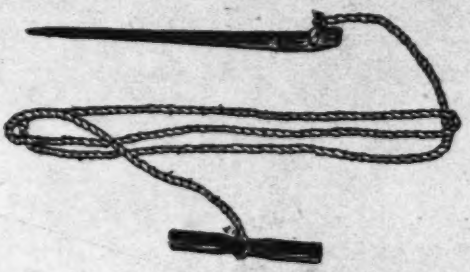

Fig. 6. Cord for stringing fish. Approx. ½ nat. size.

the bank. He spits the first three fish on his arrow, signalling for each by a shout, to which the others respond by screaming and the blowing of trumpets. Then he leaves the water and hands the fish to an old man, while everyone starts gathering the spoils.

Gathering

Gathering is indissolubly linked with nomadic or seminomadic life. Farmers in a restricted territory, like the present Timbira, cannot gather in the steppe with any measure of profit.

However, though this source of food has shrunk almost to the insignificance of fishing through the progress of agriculture and the restriction of the habitat, the Rąmkõ'kamekra still pray to the sun to protect the steppe fruits and let them grow to gladden men's hearts. This is done somewhat differently than in the corresponding prayer for game, though in almost identical words. The speaker was the oldest man of the entire tribe. He went to the plaza in the morning, rested one knee on the ground, stretched out an empty gourd bowl toward the sun, and said, "Kédeti imą ampó čo yamã ke imã hokati vayakrį'."

Before rice and manioc flour were available, when the tribal territory was about twenty times its present extent, the gathering of steppe and *galeria* fruits was perhaps proportionately greater. Ribeiro,[100] who evidently observed the Timbira with special frequency during their migratory period, enumerates the following among their wild fruits:

[100] Memoria, § 11.

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

Juçára (*Euterpe* sp.)	Piquy (*Caryocar* sp.)
Bacaba (*Oenocarpus* sp.)	Mocajuba (*Acrocomia* sp.)
Sapucaia (*Lecythis* sp.)	Mangaba (*Hancornia* sp.)
Curiti (?)	Cajá (*Anacardium* sp.)
Guabiroba	Araçá (*Psidium* sp.)
Bacury (*Platonia* sp.)	Côco = babassu (*Orbignia* sp.)
Puçá	

Strangely enough, he omits the palm that is one of the most, if not the most, important of species for the Timbira, namely, the burity (*Mauritia flexuosa*).

Snethlage thus supplements the list:[265]

Piassava (*Attalea* sp.)	Paty (*Astrocaryum* sp.)
Catulé (*Cocos comosa*)	Muricy (*Brytonima* sp.)
(Various *Astrocaryas*)	

Of all the species named only four are really important in supplying a sufficiency of food during part of the year, viz., the four palms of the *galeria* woods—juçára, bacaba, babassu, and burity.

From the fleshy layer of the seeds of the juçára, bacaba, and burity fruits the Indians prepare more or less viscid beverages, which are very nutritious by reason of their fatty content. They are strained through little round strainers, plaited from uarumã strips, whose ends are twisted together into a peripheral pad (pl. 20, *c*). The babassu yields for food not only its strongly oleaginous seeds, but also the indwelling larvae of *Bruchus nucleorum*,[266] which we have noted as used for hair pomade. The seeds are pounded in a mortar, and the pulp is rinsed with water, whence there evolves a fatty, white juice, which is poured through the above-mentioned strainer.

Anciently tribes waged war over stands of babassu, as in the fighting between the Krahõ' and the Põrekamekra noted by Pohl.[267] It was obviously this palm whose ownership was at stake; for it is especially common on the left bank of the Tocantins.

Ribeiro mentions the mocajuba trunk as a source of food and drink, a use I have never myself noted. On the other hand, the palmitos, leaf shoots, of the juçara and especially of the anajá (*Maximiliana regia*) are occasionally consumed even today.

In times of dearth the Rąmkõ'kamekra prepare a kind of flour from the root of the patioba (*Caladium* sp.; Timbira: mriti), which grows in the water of creeks and swamps.

As an article of diet, wild honey is equally insignificant. Snethlage describes the procedure of hacking it out of the trees and pouring it into gourd bottles. I have never seen beehives in Timbira villages.

Except for honey, the gathering of wild food is principally a feminine task; even nowadays women and girls are rather addicted to it. Marching through the steppe, they glance all around, almost instinctively scouring the country, and collect whatever comes near them into a gourd bowl, which they generally take along on such trips. Sometimes a large bevy of girls, especially young ones, jointly roam over the steppe for days in quest of fruits. In order not to miss their customary dances every night, they take a precentor with them, but otherwise decline a male escort and would manhandle any lad who should thrust his company upon them. During one of these marches, in 1933, I observed the following remarkable terminal performance.

During the last period of seclusion of the initiation festival held at the time a dozen girls with the precentor Kaukré and his wife marched about forty kilometers

[265] Nordostbras. Ind., 166.
[266] Cf. Frões Abreu, Terra das Palmeiras, 54.
[267] Pohl, 2:137.

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

843 As pregnancy progresses, the rules multiply: both parents are prohibited from eating the flesh of parrots, wild doves, sariemas, and armadilloes; and they must not kill a snake if they encounter one. The father must not singe a young paca at the fire lest there be a miscarriage, and he must not have sexual relations with either his wife or other women.

847 Deliberate abortion seems very rare; during the whole of my stay no case came to my notice. However, I was told that occasionally women deserted by their husbands used abortives—the decoction of the scraped bark of the pau candeia tree (*Cassia* sp.) or the malodorous shoot of an undetermined species. On the other hand, unintentional abortion often results, as I was able to note in several cases, exclusively from the pregnant woman's insistence on staggering home like others of her sex under an overloaded basket of cultivated fruits, a pleasure no Indian woman lightly renounces. Although the carrying basket is suspended from a forehead band (pl. 5, *b*), the load also rests heavily on the small of the back, with the consequences noted.

[137]

DELIVERY

844 As the period of delivery approaches, the husband partitions off the platform bed with mats, for normally parturition takes place in the dwelling. Further, he plaits a number of anajá-grass mats for bedding. No male must witness the delivery. Though the husband is allowed to remain in the partitioned space—as a rule he does not avail himself of this privilege—he must not look at his wife, for that would render the birth more difficult. An elderly matrilineal kinswoman assists, there being no special midwives.

845 In difficult cases the crushed seeds of cantaloupes (post-Columbian!) are rubbed into the small of the mother's back. Another means of relief is for the husband to walk outside round the house—a usage shared with the Apinayé and the Kaingang. A young husband is often deeply affected by the event. As a primipara, Pụtyapére had an exceedingly lengthy and painful delivery. Her husband, after having walked outside around the house several times, sat fidgeting on a racing log before the door. Beside him sat two of his as yet unmarried kwỵ'nõ in sheepish embarrassment. As I passed by, the expectant father hailed me and looked at me in so supplicating a fashion that I tried to soothe him as best I could.

844 The woman in attendance ligatures the navel string with a cotton cord and cuts it with an iron knife, whose aboriginal equivalent the Indians were unable to tell me about. On the cut they smear first urucú, then the juice of the araçá bark. The afterbirth, mekéti, is buried in a corner of the house. One must not throw away the anajá mats on which the delivery has taken place and which are changed as soon as soiled. The delivered woman's mother rolls them up and squeezes them into the fork of a tree in the steppe beyond the house, at the same time praying to the sun for protection of the infant from harm: "kedti, napáre ipụm, hompú apũi kačun nãre!" The mats are left to be destroyed by the next steppe fire.

[782]

The pelvic bones are pressed together after birth by having the woman lie on her side on the platform bed, her husband seating himself on her hip.

THE NEWBORN INFANT

847 Having never seen a single case of manifest bodily defect among about three hundred Rąmkõ'kamekra, I at first suspected them of killing crippled infants at birth, but any such practice was expressly denied.

846 The woman who assists at birth cleanses the infant's mouth with her finger, washes it, and paints it with urucú; the mother is taken behind the house and

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

According rape was unknown, the
only contrary instance being that of an Indian who had been intoxicated to senselessness in a Neobrazilian house; on the way home he ravished his twelve-year old daughter, but on coming to he had not the slightest recollection of his deed.

DAILY DANCES

The relations of the young people of opposite sex are best illustrated by their joint dances in the plaza, which normally take place three times every day during the ceremonial season. The party includes as participants:

1. The precentor, ikrérekaté. Of this category the Canella have two or three good representatives and a number of mediocre ones. The younger ones who show talent are instructed by the older precentors, at whose side they appear. A worthy precentor requires a good voice, a good memory for the innumerable dance songs, and bodily endurance. His instrument is the dance rattle, ko'tõi, made of the rind, usually painted red, of a *Crescentia cuiete*, mounted on a wooden handle that projects above as an elongated tip, by which the rattle can be planted in the ground (pl. 32, *b*, *c*). At the grip end a rectangular hole in the handle permits the insertion of a plaited wrist loop, which has a long tassel. The precentor is by no means a medicine-man nor has his rattle the slightest religious significance, as Abreu erroneously assumes.[109]

A remarkable description of the rattle wielded by a Põrekamekra precentor is given by Pohl: "This [precentor] carried in his right hand a ¾-yard-long staff along which a blackened coconut shell could be pushed up and down by the movement of the body. Within the shell were maize kernels, which produced a loud noise." I have never seen such an instrument, which recalls the "taran" observed by Snethlage among the Moré of the upper Madeira region. But Pohl does not seem to have closely viewed the object he describes, for it could hardly have been a "coconut shell" and the "maize kernels" were presumably the black pamtiį seeds which both the Eastern and Western Timbira exclusively use and specially cultivate for this purpose.

The precentor generally wears a forehead band, a neck band with a tassel for the back of the neck, sashes across the chest, sometimes cotton bracelets—never a loincloth such as Jurandyr Paes Leme paints in representing a Ponto dance.[110]

2. The precentress, mehõkrepúi, has already been referred to (p. 97).

3. The girls from about their seventh year until at least their first pregnancy. Many a woman eagerly participates even subsequently so far as the care of her infant permits. On the other hand, women of the critical age or grandmothers never take part.

4. The males comprise at least the older members of the unofficial boys' class and the two junior official classes, mepantúa.

If the youths are otherwise engaged, the girls will dance by themselves, but this is certainly not the normal thing, contrary to what might be inferred from Snethlage's and Abreu's reports, both of which mention only the dancing girls and the precentor, saying nothing about the participation of young men. Indeed, Snethlage goes so far as to speak of a "women's dance."[111]

[109] Frões Abreu, Terra das Palmeiras, 180, 182.

[110] Frões Abreu, op. cit., 182. Pohl, Reise, 2:201. "Dieser trug in der Rechten einen drey viertel Ellen langen Stab, an welchem eine schwarz gefärbte Kokosschale durch die Bewegung des Körpers auf und niedergeschoben werden konnte. In der Schale waren Maiskörner, welche ein lautes Geräusche verursachten."

[111] Snethlage, Nordostbras. Ind., 180.

/47 cont./

123 Scarcely 15 minutes later there appeared before us from
[137] out of the dry underbrush of the forest, which shortly afterward
[142] changed into densely overgrown tableland, a copper-brown,
[291] frighteningly ugly, already old Canella Indian, completely naked,
[302] with long deep-black hair flowing down over his shoulders and
[304] back (4), his ear lobes slit far apart, and holding a bow and arrows
[411] in his hands.

4. The hair style of the Canella Indians corresponds exactly to that of the Pure-came-Crans /Porecamecra/, according to the description by Martius. See Ethnographie I, 287. "The Pure-came-crans wear their hair hanging down stiffly from the crown of the head to the ears and cut it here, following the curvature of the head in such a way that a furrow is formed, under which they let it grow again and fall down to the shoulders." The hair skullcap is actually the tribal badge of the Canella, and thus the supposition that the Canella of Suridade might be a remnant of the Pure-came-Crans visited by Pohl is not unjustified.

302 171

302 619 114

in his hands.

123 576 [171] The usual Brazilian greeting formulas, which were quite familiar to the old man:

"Como passou compadre /How are you, Friend/?"

"Muito obrigado. E como vae o Senhor /Very well, thank you. And how are you, Sir/?"

"Bem /Fine/." Laconically it continues. -- The Canella: "Do you have any tobacco?"

Answer: "No. -- We are going to your village." -- "I shall go with you."

[302] [411] Shortly afterward we met five more comrades of grotesque appearance, painted with urucú red and genipa juice, almost all armed with guns. -- Another greeting scene.